

Listing of Claims:

1-19. (canceled)

20. (previously presented) A network comprising:

a medical database;

a secure medical database monitoring system communicatively coupled to the medical database; and

a first data monitoring manager communicatively coupled to the secure medical database monitoring system;

wherein at least one of the secure medical database monitoring system and the data monitoring manager is configured to provide controlled electronic access to the medical database by a plurality of entities in accordance with a specification provided by an authorized user; and

wherein the network is configured to sequentially control said electronic access with respect to a patient's data so that at least a first predetermined entity must access the patient's data before a second predetermined entity is permitted access.

21. (canceled)

22. (previously presented) A network in accordance with Claim 20 further configured to selectively control portions of the patient's data, so that each accessing entity has only a predetermined, limited access to preselected portions of the patient's data, the preselected portions varying dependent upon the accessing entity.

23. (original) A network in accordance with Claim 22 further configured to provide a plurality of threads of accessing entity sequences.

24. (previously presented) A network in accordance with Claim 22 further configured to condition access to a portion of the patient's data upon prior access by more than one different entity.

25. (currently amended) A method for communicating medical data, the method comprising:

communicating medical data directly and wirelessly to a hand-held mobile field unit from a plurality of patient medical monitoring devices, and communicating the patient monitored medical data received by the hand-held mobile field field unit to a medical database via a secure network[[.]];

defining a first sequence of authorized access to the patient monitored medical data, wherein at least a first user in the first sequence is required to access the patient monitored medical data before a second user in the first sequence is permitted to access the patient monitored medical data; and

defining a second sequence of authorized access to a restricted portion of the patient monitored medical data.

26. (previously presented) A method in accordance with Claim 25 further comprising directly and wirelessly communicating between the mobile field unit and

fixed inpatient room diagnostic units and continuous monitoring systems in patient rooms.

27. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 25 further comprising aggregating, and making available to the mobile field unit, a combination of manual, automated, fixed continuous and mobile patient monitoring and assessments.

28. (previously presented) A method in accordance with Claim 25 further comprising electronically communicating information from a database maintained by a hospital to the mobile field unit.

29. (previously presented) A method in accordance with Claim 28 further comprising transmitting encrypted data from the database to the mobile field unit.

30. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 25 further comprising electronically consolidating input from physicians, nurses, medical research/clinical personnel, and general medical staff, and electronically transmitting the consolidated input to a member of the group consisting of administrative information databases, patient account records, insurance companies, hospital medical centers, health care information databases, and combinations thereof.

31. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 25 further comprising electronically linking payment flow information between diagnostic related groups' patient hospital charges and third party insurance providers.

32. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 31 further comprising providing biometric security for the electronic linking.

33. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 32 wherein the biometric security is provided by fingerprint recognition.

34. (currently amended) A method in accordance with Claim 25 wherein defining the second sequence of authorized access to the restricted portion of the patient monitored medical data comprises further comprising limiting electronic dissemination of pathology results and medical research to selected individuals.

35. (currently amended) A method for controlling access to a medical database comprising:

defining an access protocol for entities accessing patient data, including at least a first entity having initial access to the patient data;

permitting access to the patient data by the at least first entity; and

conditioning each further access to the patient data by additional entities upon a required prior access by at least one predetermined prior entity.

36. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 35 further comprising conditioning at least one of the further accesses to the patient data upon prior access by a plurality of predetermined prior entities whose accesses are not dependent upon each other's access.

37. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 35 further comprising controlling access to the patient data using biometric and electronic security.

38. (new) A method in accordance with Claim 25 wherein a third user in the second sequence is required to access the patient monitored medical data before a fourth user in the second sequence is permitted to access the patient monitored medical data.

39. (new) A method in accordance with Claim 25 wherein at least the first user in the first sequence is required to access the patient monitored medical data before a third user in the second sequence is permitted to access the patient monitored medical data.

40. (new) A method in accordance with Claim 39 wherein the first user has access to a greater portion of the patient monitored medical data than the third user.

41. (new) A system for providing secure access to medical data, the system comprising:

means for directly and wirelessly receiving data from a patient medical monitoring device; and

means for communicating at least a first portion of the data along a first sequence of users, wherein a first user is required to access the first portion of data before a second user in the first sequence is permitted to access the first portion of data.

42. (new) A system in accordance with Claim 41 wherein the second user in the first sequence is required to access the first portion of data before a third user in the first sequence is permitted to access the first portion of data.

43. (new) A system in accordance with Claim 41 further comprising:
means for communicating at least a second portion of the data along a second sequence of users, wherein the first user is required to access the second portion of data before a third user in the second sequence is permitted to access the second portion of data.

44. (new) A system in accordance with Claim 43 wherein the third user in the second sequence is required to access the second portion of data before a fourth user in the second sequence is permitted to access the second portion of data.

45. (new) A system in accordance with Claim 43 wherein the first sequence of users do not have access to the second portion of data.